

### Inquiry unexpected consequences.

Quieter times are finding no taxis on the road, with so many owner drivers now there is no pool of drivers to fill the quiet shifts, these drivers have all started running their own car and only go out in the busy times. So on Tuesday morning at 3:00 am there may be no cars on the road. This is leading to unreliability of service.

Unreliability of service will inevitably lead people to decide to transport themselves, whether appropriate or not, or hospitality industries experiencing a decline in mid week patronage. This could easily lead to wheelchair services shutting down even further.

Increase in numbers has meant decreased income for those previously in the industry. This has seen a large exodus of experienced and professional drivers. This has left those incapable of getting employment elsewhere to be grateful of any income they can get. Falling standards will heighten this downward spiral

750% increase in vehicles and no change to the compliance officer numbers mean that only the bigger players will be checked. The smaller single operator will never be found or traced.

With reduced rebates ( PBBS) passenger selection by BSP and or Driver will increase

Wags are no longer cross subsidised by the sedan owners, couple this with the removal of age restrictions and the fleet will become older, less reliable, and more dangerous as people struggle to stay viable.

This struggle, the move to NDIS, reduction of MPTP members, and potential closing of the system, will see a 2 tier passenger network. Where passengers with a wheelchair card will be fought over by drivers, leaving those without a card to not be able to get a service.

The removal of zones has meant at big festivals towns in the district are left with no services as all the taxis move to the bigger event due to the increased income. Some small towns are actually losing services every Saturday night.

Safe ranks are no longer used as reduction in touting laws and increases in competition has seen all CPVV's congregating at Night clubs etc in a bid to get a fare.

There are now instances of fights between drivers, CPV verses Taxi, Taxi verses Taxi, and CPV verses CPV.

We now have the ridiculous situation of Taxis being half regulated and have unregulated. We don't have zones except for safety equipment, not sure why some passengers don't need to be protected just because they live in a smaller town. These vehicles can do work anywhere it should be remembered. We have regulated rank and hail fare in some places but not others. And MPTP members only get half the prescribed fare as opposed to half the actual fare.

With a massive increase in Vehicle Numbers the CPVV data resources are being overstretched so much so they are ceasing to provide some safety and reassurance tools, used by many mid to smaller operators.

We have older operators unable to retire due to lost capital particularly those with multi licences. These were considered by the owners as their superannuation. So after a lifetime of work building up an income generating asset they are left with nothing. We also have new entrants into the industry just before the announcement, left with family debts as they were hoping t build a life in Australia.

Colin Wells Manager

Taxis Associated of Bendigo Co Operative Ltd

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